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LATE MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL IN BEDFORD.

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and

and confirmed them in their moſt holy faith; ſo we truſt the Lord's bleſſing will accompany the reading of it, and all his pious and inſtructive works, to ſerious chriſtians of the preſent generation, and to thoſe yet unborn, to the end of time! The accompliſhment of which bleſſed and deſireable ends, and alſo that the everlaſting glory of the adorable Trinity, in the edification and ſalvation of ſouls, may be promoted by theſe and other means of grace, is our earneſt and ſincere prayer.

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THE

THE

LIFE AND DEATH

OF

Mr. JOHN BUNYAN,

LATE

Minister of the Gospel of CHRIST

WITH NOTES of Illustration.

PSALM cxii. 6.

The righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance.

John Bunyan was born at Elston, in the county of Bedford, within a mile of Bedford, of honest, but very poor parents. His original name was Bonyon, that is to say, how not in which the world of the great apostle to the Gentiles, in the first chapter of his epistle to the Corinthians, were made to be exemplified in Bunyan in Mr.

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* God's election is absolutely free, and sovereign. The despised poor are made heirs of the kingdom of heaven, and have the gospel preached unto them; while the most rich, learned, and wise are left to perish in their pride. "God hath chosen the foolish of this world, rich in faith," James ii. 5.

and confirmed them in their most holy faith; so we trust the Lord's blessing will accompany the reading of it, and all his pious and instructive works, to serious christians of the present generation, and to those yet unborn, to the end of time! The accomplishment of which blessed and desireable ends, and also that the everlasting glory of the adorable Trinity, in the edification and salvation of souls, may be promoted by these and other means of grace, is our earnest and sincere prayer.

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THE LIFE AND DEATH OF MR. JOHN BUNYAN,

LATE

Miniſter of the GOSPEL in BEDFORD.

With NOTES of Illuſtration.

PSALM cxii. 6.

The righteous ſhall be had in everlaſting remembrance.

MR. JOHN BUNYAN was born at Elſton, in the county of Bedford, within a little mile of that town; of honeſt, but very poor parents *; his original being ſo mean, that I know not in whom the words of the great apoſtle to the Gentiles, in the firſt chapter of his epiſtle to the Corinthians, were more fully exemplified than in Mr.

* God's election is abſolutely free: he acts herein as a ſovereign. The deſpiſed poor are made heirs of the kingdom of heaven, and have the goſpel preached unto them; while the proud rich libertine and phariſee are left to periſh in their ſins: for "God hath choſen the poor of this world, rich in faith," James ii. 5.

John Bunyan. The words are these: "For you see your calling, brethren; how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called; but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen;—that no flesh might glory in his presence." And this he himself was ready upon all occasions to own, that God might have the glory of his own grace: for though his original and birth was but poor and despised, yet it pleased God to chuse him, before many others, to be an instrument for the bringing of many souls unto God: and that the grace of God, which was given him, may be the more exceedingly magnified, we will give some brief account of what he was before the grace of God appeared to him.

I have already told you, that his parents were very mean, but that they took care to give him that learning which was suitable to their condition, bringing him up to read and write; but so great was his natural depravity, and his proneness to all evil, that he quickly forgot both, being only wise to do evil; but to do or learn that which was good or praise-worthy, he had no heart or knowledge, addicting himself so much in his very childhood to cursing, swearing, lying, and blaspheming, that he had few equals in wickedness (*a*): insomuch that I remember I have heard him say, with grief of heart, *he was a town-swearer*; that is to say, one that was taken notice of as

(*a*) The conversion of such a notorious sinner as this can be ascribed to nothing less than the almighty, irresistible power of the quickening Spirit.—In him, sin abounded beyond measure, that the riches of the grace of God in Christ Jesus might much more abound, to his own salvation, and the comfort and establishment of many others. See Rom. v. 20.

a person

a perſon that was notoriouſly wicked, by all the town where he lived: yet was not his conſcience ſeared, but would often give him ſuch twinges as made him very uneaſy: being alſo often affrighted with dreams, and terrified with viſions in the night; fearing leſt, for the ſins he had committed in the day, he ſhould be taken away by devils in the night, and by them be bound down with the chains of darkneſs to the judgment of the great day. And theſe fears were frequent with him, when he had hardly reached to the age of ten years (*a*). And theſe thoughts did not only attack him in the night-ſeaſon, but ſometimes alſo in the midſt of his childiſh vanities, among his vain companions; and ſometimes, in that condition, deſpair had taken ſo much hold on him, that he has wiſhed, that either there had been no hell, or that himſelf had been a devil, ſuppoſing that the devils were only tormenters of others, but were not tormented themſelves. And yet, when theſe thoughts had left him, he followed his ſinful pleaſures with all the eagerneſs imaginable; as if he had never had thoſe diſmal, deſpairing thoughts. So that the whole courſe of his life, from his childhood till his marriage, was what the apoſtle deſcribes in Epheſ. ii. 2, 3. "according to the courſe of this world, and the ſpirit that now worketh in the children of diſobedience, being filled with all unrighteouſneſs, and led captive by the devil at his will;" and, as he himſelf expreſſes it, the very ringleader of all the youth that kept him company, in all manner of vice and ungodlineſs.

(*a*) Behold how the goodneſs of the Lord followed him from his early age. Theſe dreadful apprehenſions, both ſleeping and waking, were evident tokens of God's gracious purpoſes towards him; the Lord, as a quickening Spirit, working on his conſcience. Many eminent chriſtians can bear witneſs to the like gracious dealings to them in their youth, in order to lead them to Chriſt.

But, notwithſtanding all this wickedneſs of his, God did not utterly leave him, but followed him ſometimes with convictions, and ſometimes with judgments, but yet ſuch as had in them a mixture of mercy: at one time he fell into a creek of the ſea, and then hardly eſcaped drowning; and at another time he fell out of a boat into Bedford river; but there he alſo was preſerved, though with great difficulty: but alas! it was neither mercy nor judgment that could yet awaken him, for he had given up himſelf to the love of ſin, and was fully reſolved to go on, whatever rubs he met with in his way (*a*).

Yet God left not himſelf without a witneſs in his ſoul, often checking him in one way or another; as one day being at Sly with his companions, a voice ſuddenly darted from heaven into his ſoul, ſaying, *Wilt thou leave thy ſins, and go to heaven? or have thy ſins, and go to hell?* This put him into ſuch a conſternation, that he immediately left his ſport, and, looking up to heaven, thought he ſaw the Lord Jeſus looking down upon him, as one hotly diſpleaſed with him, and threatening him with ſome grievous puniſhments for his ungodly practices.

But ſee the works of Satan! No ſooner had this made ſome impreſſion on his mind, but the devil ſuggeſted to him, that he had been a great and grievous ſinner; and that it was now too late for him to look after heaven, for Chriſt would not forgive him, nor pardon his tranſgreſſions. And this is no other than the devil's uſual practice: firſt, to draw ſinners to commit all iniquity with greedineſs, and then to perſuade them there is no hope of mercy left, that thereby the ſinner

(*a*) Thus we ſee that neither outward judgments nor inward calls can effectually and ſavingly work upon the ſoul, till the Lord, the great phyſician, "put forth his hand, and ſay, I will, be thou clean," Matt. viii. 3.

may

may be prevailed with to go on in ſin. And this was the effect that this ſuggeſtion had upon Mr. Bunyan; who, looking upon himſelf as one that had ſinned beyond the reach of mercy, thought within himſelf, that he would take his fill of ſin, it being the only pleaſure he was ever like to have (*a*). And yet theſe pleaſures of ſin, thro' the wonderful operations of the Holy Spirit, were ſo often imbittered to him, that he could take but little ſatisfaction in them; for, "the labour of the natural man (or man before converſion) doth but weary him, becauſe he knoweth not the way to the city of God," Eccleſ. x. 15.

Once as he was going on in the full career of ſin, and belching out oaths like the madman that Solomon ſpeaks of, who ſcatters abroad firebrands, arrows, and death, he was reproved ſeverely by a woman who was a notorious ſinner herſelf; who told him, that *he was the ugliеſt fellow for ſwearing that ever ſhe heard in all her life; and that, by his doing thus, he was able to ſpoil all the youth in the town, if they came into his company.* This reproof, coming from ſuch a woman, whom he knew to be very wicked and ungodly, filled him with great ſhame; and wrought more with him than many that had been given him before, by thoſe that were ſober and godly; and made him wiſh that he had never known what it was to be a ſwearer, and even made him out of love with it, and from that time forward

(*a*) The utmoſt exertion of Satan's power, malice, and rage, ſhall not hinder a ſingle ſoul, on whom the Lord has ſet his love, from coming to Chriſt; but ſhall rather tend to raiſe a more ſtately monument of gratitude and praiſe to divine, unexampled goodneſs, and lay the humbled ſinner low in the duſt at the feet of Jeſus; for they who have much forgiven, will, with penitent Mary, alſo love much; ſee Luke vii. 37—47. That love to God, which flows from a lively ſenſe of his pardoning mercy towards us in and through Chriſt Jeſus, will ever be a conſtraining motive to holy obedience.

very

very much to refrain from it (*a*). This puts me in mind of a ſtory I have read in the life of holy Mr. Perkins, who in his younger years was as great a debauché as any in the univerſity of Cambridge, where he was brought up. He coming one time through the out-parts of the town, heard a woman ſay to her child that was froward and peeviſh, *Either hold your tongue, or I'll give you to drunken* Perkins *yonder.* Theſe words were ſo great a reproof to him, finding himſelf made a common bye-word among people, that it made him reſolve upon a reformation; and this, by God's gracious and all-diſpenſing providence, was one great ſtep towards his converſion.

But to return to Mr. Bunyan: God having a deſign of grace towards him, gave him frequent checks and interruptions in the midſt of his ſtrongeſt reſolutions to go on in his ſin: ſometimes ſcaring him with dreams, and terrifying him with viſions, in an extraordinary manner; verifying that of Elihu to Job, in the xxxiiid chapter of that book, and the 14th verſe, and forward: "For God ſpeaketh once, yea, twice, yet man perceiveth it not: in a dream, in a viſion of the night; when deep ſleep falleth upon men, in ſlumberings upon the bed: then he openeth the ears of men, and ſealeth their inſtruction: that he may withdraw man from his purpoſe, and keep back his ſoul from the pit, and his life from periſhing." For once he dreamed that he ſaw the face of the heavens, as it were, all on fire, and the firmament cracking and ſhi-

(*a*) Converſion is ſometimes effected, through infinite wiſdom, by the moſt unlikely means and inſtruments.——Many, who periſh in their ſins, have involuntarily darted convictions, tending to ſalvation, into the minds of God's people, as in the preſent inſtance. May we not therefore exclaim with the apoſtle, Rom. xi. 33. "O the depth of the riches both of the wiſdom and knowledge of God! how unſearchable are his judgments, and his ways paſt finding out!"

vering

vering with the noiſe of mighty thunders, and that an archangel flew in the midſt of heaven, ſounding a trumpet; and a throne of glory was ſeated in the eaſt, whereon ſat a perſon in brightneſs like the morning-ſtar. Upon which Mr. Bunyan, thinking in his dream that it was the end of the world, fell upon his knees, and with uplifted hands towards heaven, cried out, *O Lord God, have mercy upon me! What ſhall I do! The day of judgment is come, and I am not prepared!* and then immediately he heard a voice behind him, ſaying, ***Repent.*** And upon this he awaked, and found it was but a dream: but ſurely it was a very awful dream, and a *memento* ſent from heaven; and it had an effect accordingly, for upon this he grew more ſerious, and it remained in his mind a conſiderable time (*a*). This was a part of God's dealing with him, to withdraw him from his purpoſe of ſinning, and to keep back his ſoul from the pit of deſtruction.

At another time he dreamed that he was in a pleaſant place, living in riot and luxury, banquetting and feaſting his ſenſes: where, on a ſudden, even in a moment, a mighty earthquake rent the earth in ſunder, and out of the wide and dreadful gap came bloody and amazing flames, and in thoſe flames the figures of men toſſed up in globes of fire, and falling down again, with horrid ſhrieks, cries, and execrations; whilſt ſome devils, that were mingled with them, laughed aloud at their torments. And whilſt he ſtood trembling at this affrighting viſion, he thought the earth

(*a*) By the terrors of the Lord, great ſinners may be perſuaded to forſake their impious ways for a ſeaſon, and ſet about a ſpecious kind of reformation, after many ſolemn warnings, as was the caſe of Mr. Bunyan: but as convictions do not always iſſue in converſion, ſo the feeble reſolutions produced by them frequently prove as the morning cloud, and paſs away as the early dew, Hoſ. vi. 4. "Salvation is of the Lord," Jonah ii. 9. and to him all the glory of it is juſtly due.

ſhook

ſhook under him, and a circle of flame incloſed him: but when he thought himſelf juſt at the point of periſhing, one in white ſhining raiment deſcended, and plucked him out of that dreadful place; whilſt the devils cried after him, to leave him with them, that he might receive the juſt puniſhment his ſins had deſerved: yet he eſcaped the danger. He was extremely affrighted with this dream, and not a little glad he found it to be but a dream, though indeed it was a great deal more, for it was the ſecret working of the Almighty upon his ſpirit, to draw him from his ſins, although he was ignorant of Chriſt, and ſo wedded unto ſport and play that he could not leave it.

But in a little time after he fell into the company of a poor man that made profeſſion of religion, whoſe diſcourſe of religion and of the ſcriptures ſo affected Mr. Bunyan, that he betook himſelf to reading the bible, eſpecially the hiſtorical part thereof; but was yet ignorant both of the corruption and depravity of his nature, and, by a neceſſary conſequence, of the want and worth of Jeſus Chriſt to ſave him.

However, this produced outward reformation both in his words and life; and he now was fallen into a kind of legal religion, working for life, and making up a righteouſneſs for himſelf thereby (*a*); ſo that while he thought he kept the commandments, he had comfort; but when at ſome times he broke any of them, his conſcience was full of guilt and trouble: but then upon his ſorrow and repentance he healed

(*a*) The religion of the phariſee leaves the ſinner juſt as it found him; yea, rather brings him into a fool's paradiſe, which his pride and ſelf-righteouſneſs will not ſuffer him to quit. Regeneration is the ground-work of ſalvation; according to John iii. 3. "Except a man be born again, he cannot ſee the kingdom of God;" he can have no adequate conception of the nature of that kingdom, much leſs can he enjoy the bleſſings of it.

himſelf

himſelf again, and thought thereby he had made God amends, and all was well.

And thus he continued for ſome time, very near a year; his neighbours all that time taking him for a very good man, and wondering at his reformation; though indeed all that time he was as far from the way of life, as when he was moſt profane (*a*): tho', as himſelf phraſes it, his change of life and manners was as remarkable, as for Tom of Bedlam to become a ſober man.

And now thoſe that ſpoke ill of him before, began to praiſe and commend him, both to his face and behind his back; which, notwithſtanding his reformation, puffed him up with pride, and filled him with hypocriſy. He had been mightily addicted to ringing, and, for all his reformation, was very unwilling to leave it: but his conſcience beginning to be tender, he thought the practice thereof to be but vain, and ſo forced himſelf to leave it, yet could not keep his mind from hankering after it; and therefore would not ring. But then he was ſurpriſed with fears, that poſſibly one of the bells might fall and kill him; and then he durſt no longer go into the ſteeple, but would ſtand at the door, and even there he was afraid leſt the ſteeple itſelf ſhould fall upon him. This both ſhewed continual conviction, and that yet the love of pleaſures ſtill remained, and his corrupt affections were

(*a*) A mere outward reformation, with the heart unrenewed, is unavailable to ſalvation. No effectual ſaving change can take place in a ſinner, till, in the glaſs of God's law, it is given him to ſee his abominable nature by the fall, his numberleſs actual ſins, and obnoxiouſneſs to the wrath of God, and everlaſting baniſhment from his preſence and glory, on the account of them. This humbling view is wrought in the ſoul by the quickening Spirit of God, which in due time points it to the Saviour and Friend of the miſerable and needy—to his atoning ſacrifice for pardon, to his divine righteouſneſs for juſtification and acceptance with God.

unmortified. Dancing was alſo another thing in which he much delighted; and he found it a hard thing to relinquiſh that alſo, it being near a year before he could leave it off.

But, alas! this was but lopping off the branches of ſin, whilſt the root of unregeneracy remained: this was but building upon the old foundation, which muſt all be overturned, where God intends to carry on his work in truth. But it pleaſed God, in his wonderful wiſdom and goodneſs, to let him paſs through theſe things, that he might the better know how to direct thoſe poor wandering ſouls that ſhould be afterwards in ſuch a ſtate, which in itſelf is very dangerous: for no ſort of ſinners are in a more deſperate condition than thoſe that are "pure in their own eyes, and yet are not cleanſed from their filthineſs," Prov. xxx. 12.

Not long after, the providence of God ſo ordered it, that Mr. Bunyan went to Bedford to work at his calling, and happened there to hear three or four poor women, who were ſitting in the ſun, diſcourſing together about the things of God; which cauſed him to draw near to them, for he was by this time himſelf become a mighty talker of religion: but when he had heard them awhile, as himſelf confeſſed, he heard indeed, but he underſtood not, for they ſpoke of things above his reach (*a*); diſcourſing of the new birth, and the work of God on their hearts, and how they were convinced of their miſerable ſtate by nature: they

(*a*) As, on the one hand, "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God—becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned," 1 Cor. ii. 14. the myſteries of the kingdom of God being only revealed to new-born ſouls: ſo, on the other, the ſpiritual communion of the children of God is always attended with bleſſed effects to their own ſouls, and is frequently inſtrumental to the conviction of others, as appears in the ſequel. In ſuch heavenly conferences, Jeſus is ſure to make one of the company. See Luke xxiv. 15.

talked,

talked, how God had viſited their ſouls with his love in the Lord Jeſus; and with what words and promiſes they had been refreſhed, comforted, and ſupported againſt the temptations of the devil: they alſo reaſoned of the ſuggeſtions and temptations of the evil one in particular; and told each other by which they had been afflicted, and how they were borne up under his aſſaults. He heard them likewiſe diſcourſe of the wretchedneſs of their own hearts, and of their unbelief: and of contemning and abhorring their own righteouſneſs, as filthy, and inſufficient to do them any good. And all this appeared to him to be ſpoken with ſuch an air of joy and pleaſantneſs of ſcripture-lauguage, and with ſuch an appearance of grace in all they ſaid, that they ſeemed to him as if they had found a new world; as if they were people that dwelt alone, and were not to be reckoned among their neighbours.

It was upon this diſcourſe of theirs that he began to feel ſome unuſual agitations in his own heart, and to be conſcious to himſelf that his own condition was not ſo good as he had thought it to be; becauſe, in all his thoughts about religion and ſalvation, the new birth never entered into his mind; but he found it was a thing he was wholly a ſtranger to, and unacquainted with: nor did he know the comfort of a word or promiſe, nor the deceitfulneſs or treachery of his own wicked heart (*a*): and as for ſecret thoughts, he had

(*a*) It is often long, very long, before the myſtery of iniquity within us, and the depths of Satan, are unfolded to the believer: this is an effect of the tender mercy of our God. The work of grace is gradual; "for it is God that worketh in us both to will and to do, of his own good pleaſure," Philip. ii. 13. The Lord deals with his people, according as they can bear his manifeſtations. May he make us humble, thankful receivers of the ineſtimable bleſſings of redemption he ſo freely beſtows! To ſuch, he will give more grace; from ſuch, he will with-hold no needful bleſſing.

never taken any notice of them; nor did he at all underſtand what Satan's temptations were, or how they were to be withſtood or reſiſted.

But however, this diſcourſe of theſe good women mightily affected him, and made him very deſirous to hear further of theſe things: and therefore he made it his buſineſs to be going often into the company of thoſe people, for God had touched his heart by their diſcourſe, and he could not ſtay away (*a*). And ſo intent was his mind upon the knowledge of theſe things, that his heart, like the horſe-leech at the vein, ſtill cried out, "Give, Give," Prov. xxx. 15. And now nothing but the revelation of the myſtery of faith in his own heart could ſatisfy him: for his whole ſoul was then ſo fixed on eternity, and the things of the kingdom of God, ſo far as he knew, that neither pleaſures nor profits, perſuaſions nor threats, could make him let go his hold; inſomuch that I have heard him ſay, that it would have been as difficult, at that time, to have taken his mind from heaven to earth, as he found it often ſince to get it from earth to heaven.

But after divine grace had been thus kindled in his heart, the devil ſtrove hard, by divers winds of temptations, to blow it out again (*b*); cauſing him to make ſeveral objections againſt himſelf: as, 'that he was

(*a*) The loving-kindneſs of the Lord will ſurely follow, to the day of eternal redemption, all thoſe on whom he has ſavingly wrought by his Spirit: effectual grace given, is glory begun. The Lord alluringly draws with the cords of a man, and ſweetly detains with the bands of love. It will be our wiſdom to maintain holy and happy communion with a covenant God; and, to that end, "grieve not the Spirit of God whereby ye are *ſealed* unto the day of redemption," Eph. iv. 30.

(*b*) Satan, the reſtleſs enemy of ſouls, after he has loſt his prey, will nevertheleſs purſue it with malicious rage, and worry and diſtreſs the Lambs of Chriſt's flock by a variety of temptations and fiery darts: no period of a believer's life is exempt from them; but bleſſed be our loving and almighty Shepherd for that encouraging promiſe, Iſa. liv. 17. "No weapon formed againſt thee ſhall proſper."

caſt

caſt away; and one that had no faith, and never could have any, becauſe he was not elected.'

One thing, that was likewiſe a great ſtumbling-block to him, was, that the devil was let looſe at this time in a ſort of people that called themſelves Ranters; and indeed they deſerved that name, giving up themſelves to thoſe filthy uncleanneſſes that ought not to be named amongſt chriſtians: notwithſtanding which, they wrote ſeveral books that were highly in eſteem among thoſe who were old profeſſors. And among thoſe that became Ranters, was that poor man before ſpoken of, who had been all along Mr. Bunyan's intimate companion (*a*); this man turned one of the worſt and vileſt of theſe people, living in all manner of filthineſs; denying there was either God, angel, or ſpirit, and laughing at all exhortations to ſobriety; and when Mr. Bunyan rebuked him for it, he would laugh the more, and pretend that he had gone through all religions, and could never alight on the right till then; perſuading him to be of the ſame opinion with him, and a companion of his wickedneſs. But God deſign'd to make him a choſen veſſel of honour, and an inſtrument for the carrying on the purpoſes of his own glory, and therefore begat in his heart ſo great an averſion to, and loathing of thoſe wicked principles, that he quite left his company, and became a greater ſtranger to him afterwards than he had been a familiar before (*b*). But becauſe ſeveral old profeſſors (as has been already ſaid) ſeemed to ap-

(*a*) See before, page 8.

(*b*) No doubt but this good man had recourſe to the word of God in this difficult caſe; and, from that, judged of principles from practices. He there ſaw that Chriſt could have no concord with Belial, 2 Cor. vi. 15. He then wiſely applied to the throne of grace, for wiſdom and direction from that bountiful God who giveth liberally, and upbraideth not, James i. 5. To be like-minded on ſuch occaſions, will prove a happy means of deliverance in every time of trouble, diſtreſs, and danger.

prove

prove of their books, Mr. Bunyan ventured to read ſome of them; but not being able (as he ſaid) to make a judgment of them, he addreſſed himſelf to God in the following words: 'O Lord, I am a fool, and not able to know the truth from error: Lord, leave me not to my own blindneſs, either to approve or condemn this doctrine: if it be of God, let me not deſpiſe it; if it be of the devil, let me not embrace it. Lord, I lay my ſoul in this matter only at thy foot; let me not be deceived, I humbly beſeech thee.' I could not forbear inſerting this paſſage (which I tranſcribed out of his book called Grace Abounding), becauſe it ſhews at once both the great ſincerity and tenderneſs and deep humility of this holy man, and of what an excellent ſpirit he was.

But theſe people's errors, and much more their wicked practices, endeared God's word to him exceedingly; ſo that now he began to look upon the Bible with new eyes, as it were, and to read ſo as he never read before. At firſt, he only took pleaſure in reading the hiſtorical part; but now the epiſtles of Paul were ſweet and pleaſant to him: yea, ſo much ſweetneſs did he find therein, that he was ſcarcely ever abſent (when he had an opportunity) from reading of them, or meditating on them; ſtill crying out to God, that he might know the truth, and the way to life and glory.

But he was a long time troubled with very ſore temptations, as I ſaid before; and three things there were that the tempter made uſe of to try him (*a*).

(*a*) All are not tempted in the ſame way; the adverſary has various engines for his purpoſe: he knows our beſetting and conſtitutional ſin. But our Jeſus has conquered him for us, and, through faith and prayer, will conquer him in us, and give ſtrength to reſiſt his utmoſt efforts and ſnares. If we cleave to this all-ſufficient Saviour in loving obedience, and walk in his ways, he will, in his own beſt time and manner, reſcue us from every enemy to our peace, and at length magnify his grace in our complete and everlaſting ſalvation. Wait, I ſay, on the Lord.

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One great thing was, the queſtioning of his faith, having frequently ſuch thoughts as theſe injected into his mind: 'How if you want faith?' And, 'How can you tell that you have faith?' This put him to great perplexities: he knew not that he had it; and yet, without it, he ſaw he was like to periſh for ever: ſo that though at firſt he was willing to overlook it, yet conſidering of how great moment it was for him to be ſatisfied therein, he was willing to put himſelf upon the trial, whether he had faith, or no (*a*). But while he was conſidering how he ſhould make a ſatisfactory trial of this matter, the tempter ſought again to take advantage upon him, coming in with this deluſion, 'that there was no way for him to try whether he had faith, but by trying to work ſome miracle.' Nor wanted he ſcripture to back it; for, as he perverted the ſcriptures when he tempted our bleſſed Lord, ſo did he alſo the words of our bleſſed Saviour, in tempting this his ſervant, urging Matth. xvii. 20. "If ye have faith as a grain of muſtard-ſeed, ye ſhall ſay unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place, and it ſhall remove; and nothing ſhall be impoſſible to you." The temptation proceeded ſo far, that one day Mr. Bunyan, being between Elſtow and Bedford (the temptation being then hot upon him, to try his faith by doing ſome miracle),

(*a*) Inquiries of this ſort often bring young converts into great embarraſſments. The ſcriptural definition of faith is, that it is "the ſubſtance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not ſeen," Heb. xi. 1. Faith comes by venturing on Chriſt as he is offered in the word;—mercy to the miſerable, ſalvation to the loſt. If we honour God, by giving credit to his word, he will honour that faith, by giving us joy and peace in believing. Chriſt ſays, "*Whoſoever* will, let him come," &c. Let every doubting heart reply, Lord, I, an unworthy, wretched ſinner, am one of the number thou inviteſt: ſave *me*, or I periſh!——God's call is univerſal; let none exclude themſelves; but take the water of life freely. As faith is the gift of God, we ſhould pray for that bleſſing, and an increaſing poſſeſſion of it.

he

he was about to ſay to ſome puddles that were then in the horſe-pad, *Be dry!* and as he was going to ſpeak, this thought came into his mind, '*Pray firſt*, that God would make you able;' and when he was about to pray, he had ſome ſecret impulſe that prevailed with him, not to put his faith upon that trial; and ſo he continued for ſome time at a great loſs, not knowing whether he had faith, or not.

Another temptation, with which he was aſſaulted, was, 'Whether or no he was elected:' and this temptation was ſtrengthened with this ſcripture, "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that ſheweth mercy," Rom. ix. 16. for by this ſcripture he evidently ſaw, that, unleſs God had choſen him to be a veſſel of grace, all he could do would be ineffectual for the obtaining of ſalvation; and therefore this was continually in his mind, 'How can you tell that you are elected? And what if you ſhould not?' (*a*) And theſe queſtions ſeemed ſo hard, and to be of that weight, that he knew not how to anſwer them. But there is nothing too hard for divine grace to overcome: for one day, juſt as his hope was giving up the ghoſt, and that he was at the utmoſt point of deſpair, the following ſentence was darted into his ſoul as if it had been immediately from heaven, and fell with great weight upon his ſpirit, "Look at the generations of old, and ſee, did ever

(*a*) The beſt way to be aſſured of our election, is, not to cavil at, ridicule, or argue preſumptuouſly about the doctrine; but to examine and compare our ſtate with the touchſtone of truth, the word of God. A good tree is always known by its fruits: the elect of God, in like manner, know Chriſt, eſteem him precious, and chearfully obey him from principles of love and gratitude. As, by faith, we embrace the Saviour, and live upon his fullneſs; ſo all comforts, aſſurance, holineſs, patience, perſeverance, &c. come in the way of believing. Theſe fruits prove our election. Note well, the Lord is a God of means, and of order: beware, therefore, of enthuſiaſm, and of tempting God. Read 1 John ii. 3. John xiv. 15.

any

any truſt in God, and was confounded?" This gave him mighty encouragement in that caſe, and was thus expounded to him: 'Begin at the beginning of Geneſis, and read to the end of the Revelation, and ſee 'if you can find there was any that ever truſted in 'God, and was confounded. And if none that truſted 'in God ever miſcarried, then your duty is, to truſt 'in God, and not to concern yourſelf about election, 'which is a ſecret thing.'

Another temptation that violently aſſaulted him, was, 'How if the day of grace ſhould be paſt and 'gone?' And, to aggravate this, the tempter ſuggeſted to him, that the good people in Bedford (before named) being converted already, they were all that God would ſave in thoſe parts, and therefore he was come too late, for they had got the bleſſing before him. This was a very cutting thing to him, for he verily thought it might be ſo: and thoſe thoughts made him wander up and down in the bitterneſs of his ſpirit, bemoaning his ſad condition (*a*), and crying out, 'Oh that I 'had turned ſooner! O how have I trifled away my 'time, till heaven and my ſoul are loſt!' But after he had paſſed many days in this diſconſolate ſtate, it pleaſed the Father of mercies to ſhine upon his ſoul by that bleſſed word, Luke xiv. 23, 24. "Compel them to come in, that my houſe may be filled:—AND YET THERE IS ROOM." The laſt words gave him abundant conſolation, and were a full anſwer to Satan's ſuggeſtion, that the day of grace was paſt.

(*a*) We cannot have too humiliating a perception of our ſinful nature and actual tranſgreſſions; but at the ſame time let us beware of detracting from the infinite extent of the grace of God in Chriſt Jeſus, by deſpair and unbelief: for where ſin hath abounded, grace hath much more abounded to the penitent and ſin-forſaking ſoul. May the long-ſuffering of God, and his unmerited, unſought-for mercy, lead every poor deſponding ſoul to repentance, and acknowledgment of the truth! Thus Jeſus will be glorified, and the hearts of diſconſolate ſinners refreſhed.

But this holy man had been a great ſinner, which he always aggravated againſt himſelf on all occaſions; reckoning up, like Paul, his own vileneſs before his converſion: "I was mad againſt the ſaints," ſays that bleſſed apoſtle in one place; and, in another, "I perſecuted the church of God." So in the like manner our worthy Mr. Bunyan cries out of himſelf, 'I was 'a town ſinner: I was the vileſt in the country, a 'Jeruſalem ſinner; murdering the Son of God afreſh 'by my ungodly deeds, and putting him to open 'ſhame.' This, I ſay, made him undergo many of the buffetings of Satan, and the hidings of God's countenance for months and years together; ſtill mourning as a dove, and chattering as a ſwallow. And yet in this alſo behold the wiſdom and goodneſs of God: for by theſe things men live, and in all theſe things was the life of his ſpirit. God wonderfully fitted him, by all theſe temptations, to be a ſupport to many others that laboured under thoſe or other temptations; for by this means he was one that knew how to ſpeak a word in ſeaſon to the weary and fainting ſoul, adminiſtering to others thoſe comforts wherewith he himſelf had been comforted of God (*a*).

But to return where we left off, even to his temptations: he was mightily buffeted, by the enemy of ſouls, about effectual calling; for that being one of the links of the golden chain of ſalvation mentioned by the apoſtle

(*a*) Mr. Bunyan's ſupport amidſt theſe fiery trials, confirmed the truth of that ſcripture, "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations," 2 Pet. ii. 9. Bleſſed is the ſoul, that, ſtill waiting upon God in his ways, can, under every afflicting diſpenſation, ſay with the prophet Micah, vii. 9. "I will bear the indignation of the Lord, becauſe I have ſinned againſt him;" and with Jeremiah, Lam. iii. 39. "Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the puniſhment of his ſins?" "Let patience, therefore, have her perfect work," James i. 4.

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in the ninth of the Romans, 'if that be left out, the 'whole chain was broken:' this made him pant and breathe and cry, with all the longing of an enamoured ſoul, to Chriſt, to call him; for then he ſaw ſuch a beauty in a converted and called ſtate, that he could not be contented without it: and I have heard him affirm, that at that time, had he had the whole world, it had all gone, yea ten thouſand worlds, could he have purchaſed the bleſſing of a called and converted ſtate with others! for ſuch were the only lovely perſons in his eyes. But that word of Chriſt, Mark iii. 13. ſtood like a braſen wall againſt him, to ſhut him out from all the hopes of happineſs: his words were theſe; "He (Chriſt) went up into a mountain, and CALLED to him WHOM HE WOULD." This word made him faint and fear, and yet it kindled a fire in his ſoul: that which made him fear, was, leſt Chriſt ſhould have no liking to him, for HE CALLED WHOM HE WOULD. And God was pleaſed to let him lie many months in that condition; and then he gave him comfort by that word in Joel, iii. 21. "I will cleanſe their blood that I have not cleanſed:" encouraging him thereby ſtill to wait upon God; and though he was not already, yet he might ſtill be called.

About this time he began to make his condition known to thoſe poor people, whoſe diſcourſe had been the firſt occaſion of his real converſion (*a*). When they had heard him, they told Mr. Gifford, the worthy paſtor of that church, who was himſelf willing to be

(*a*) Chriſtian converſation is often made happily inſtrumental to ſaving knowledge, tends to remove unbelieving doubts and fears, ſtrengthen weak believers, and confirm others in the faith; therefore the advice is, "Forſake not the aſſembling of yourſelves together," Heb. x. 25. and the encouragement our dear Lord gives for ſpiritual converſe, is very engaging, "Where two or three are met together in my name, there am I in the midſt of them," Matt. xviii. 20.

well perſuaded of him, and he invited him to his own houſe, where he heard him converſe with others about the dealings of God with their ſouls: from which he ſtill received further convictions, and ſaw more of the deceitfulneſs of his own heart.

After this, a very great ſtorm of temptation fell upon him, whereof he had ſome warning before, from that ſcripture following him, "Simon, Simon, when thou art converted, ſtrengthen thy brethren;" altho' then he underſtood not the meaning of it. This temptation was a flood of blaſphemous thoughts poured in upon him, inſomuch that he queſtioned the very being of God, and of his beloved Son, doubting whether there was at all in truth a God or Chriſt; and whether the holy ſcriptures were not rather cunningly-deviſed fables, than the pure word of God.

The tempter alſo aſſaulted him with this, 'How 'can you tell but the Turks may have as good a ſcrip-'ture, to prove their Mahomet the Saviour, as we have 'to prove that our Jeſus is (*a*)?' with many the like blaſphemous ſuggeſtions.

Under this ſore affliction and deſertion he went a great while: but when God's time to comfort him was come, he heard one preach a ſermon on Canticles iv. 1. "Behold, thou art fair, my love; behold, thou art fair." But at that time the miniſter made theſe two words, "my love," the ſubject of his ſermon:

(*a*) It behoves every one, who is in earneſt about their ſalvation, to be firmly perſuaded, that the ſcriptures, from their ſimplicity, purity, conſiſtency, ſelf-denying precepts, and univerſal oppoſition to ſin, can be no other than the unerring word of the God of wiſdom, truth, and love,—the tranſcript of the Divine Mind. This being allowed, the abſurd notion of univerſal redemption, or of ſalvation by any other method than that propoſed in the goſpel, will appear to be founded in pride, ignorance, and be of dangerous tendency; foraſmuch as we are told, that "there is *no other* name, given under heaven whereby men can be ſaved, but that of Jeſus Chriſt," Acts iv. 12. "Bleſſed are all they that put their truſt in him!" Pſ. ii. 12.

from

from which, after he had a little opened the text, he drew these several conclusions:

1. That the church, and so every sacred soul, is Christ's love, when loveless.

2. Christ's love, without a cause.

3. Christ's love, when hated of the world.

4. Christ's love, when under temptation and desertion.

6. Christ's love, from first to last.

The sermon (though very excellent) was nothing to him: but that which most affected him, was, the application of the fourth particular, which was, 'If it 'be so, that the saved soul is Christ's love, when under 'temptations and under desertion, then, poor tempted 'soul, when thou art assaulted and afflicted with tempta-'tions, and the hidings of God's face, yet still think 'on these two words, *my love*.' And as he was going home, these words came into his thoughts again, insomuch that he said in his heart, 'What shall I get by 'thinking on these words?' And this thought had no sooner passed, but these words began to kindle on his spirit, 'Thou art my love, thou art my love,' twenty times together (*a*); and still as they ran in his mind, they grew stronger and warmer, and began a little to revive him: but being still between hope and fear, he said in his heart, 'But is it true? But is it 'true?' ingeminating the words. At which that sentence darted into his mind, "He wist not that it was

(*a*) Thus we see, that when effectual grace has begun to work savingly upon a sinner's heart, by the drawings of the Father, God's purposes of love are, like himself, unchangeable and eternal: no obstacle shall be able to counteract or set them aside: for, "the gifts and calling of God are without repentance", Rom. xi. 29. "God rests in his love," Zeph. iii. 17. and "whom he loves, he loves unto the end," John iii. 1. May these gracious declarations call forth our gratitude and love to God, incline us to devote our hearts and lives to his service; and dispose us, thro' his grace, to glorify our God and Saviour in all things!

true

true that was done unto him of the angel," Acts xii. 6. And then he began to give place to the word that made this joyful ſound within his ſoul: 'Thou art 'my love, thou art my love, and nothing ſhall ſeparate 'thee from my love.'

Many more were his temptations at ſundry times, and on divers occaſions; but God delivered him out of them all, and at laſt ſet his feet in a large place, filling his ſoul with joy and gladneſs.

About the year 1655 he was baptized, and admitted a member of the church at Bedford; who having had experience of the grace of God that was in him, and how eminently God had fitted him for the work of the miniſtry, he was earneſtly deſired, by the congregation, to communicate to them thoſe ſpiritual gifts with which God had bleſſed him. He at firſt very modeſtly excuſed himſelf out of a ſenſe of his own weakneſs and inability (*a*); but being further preſſed unto it by them, he conſented: but though his baſhfulneſs did at firſt decline a public aſſembly, and he diſpenſed his

(*a*) The work of the miniſtry is undoubtedly a moſt important charge: "Who is ſufficient for theſe things?" None ſhould engage in it, unleſs they are conſcious of a divine call, leſt, the blind leading the blind, they both fall into the ditch, and periſh together. It ſhould never be entered upon without earneſt prayer for God's aſſiſtance and ſupport throughout, well knowing the awful account they muſt one day give at Chriſt's judgment-bar. Thus did Iſaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and others under the Old Teſtament: ſo have done, and will do, every true ſhepherd under the New; but, "an hireling careth not for the ſheep," John x. 12. he can neither feed or defend them.—Seeing, then, the duties of the ſacred office are ſo painful and weighty, it ſhould be equally the concern of every pious chriſtian to beg, that the God of all grace will grant to each faithful labourer ſtrength, matter, and utterance in the arduous employ; and that, experiencing the excellency and ſuitableneſs of Chriſt to their own ſouls (his precious blood to pardon, his perfect righteouſneſs to juſtify, and his holy Spirit to ſanctify), they may be able to ſet him forth as the chief and only good to others; and that their bleſſed Maſter may fulfil his gracious promiſe concerning them, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world," Matt. xxviii. 20.

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gift only in private among friends, yet it was with ſo much life and power, and ſo exceedingly to their edification, that they could not but give thanks to the Father of mercies, for the great grace he had beſtowed upon him.

After this, when ſome of the congregation were ſent forth into the country to teach, they deſired Mr. Bunyan to go along with them, which accordingly he did: and, by their perſuaſions, did exerciſe his gift (but ſtill privately) among the good people where he came: which they alſo received, with rejoicing at the mercy of God ſhewed toward him, profeſſing their ſouls very greatly edified thereby.

Some time after which, he was, by ſolemn prayer to the Lord, and faſting, more particularly called forth and ſet apart for the more public preaching of the word of God: which he entered upon with great fear and trembling, and with a deep ſenſe of his own unworthineſs: and God was pleaſed to bleſs and proſper the work of his hand, ſo that many ſouls were every-where brought to lay hold upon the Lord Jeſus by believing, and to the receiving of the truth in the love thereof, through his miniſtry, to the praiſe and glory of God's grace (*a*).

One remarkable inſtance I cannot omit, and that is, That being to preach in a church in a country-village (before the Reſtoration of king Charles) in

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(*a*) See the preceding note: to which we may here add, that as the bleſſings ariſing from a lively, goſpel miniſtry, cannot be too highly prized; nor thoſe heavenly meſſengers too much reverenced and beloved for their uſeful labours in promoting the glory of God by the ſalvation of ſinners, in which momentous concern their whole ſtrength, time, and talents are engaged;—ſo nothing can contribute more to their joy, than when they ſee their paſtoral charge become fruitful branches in the heavenly Vine; and that they do not only ſpeculatively believe, but, receiving the truth in love, obey and walk in it. This they will do by looking ſtedfaſtly to Jeſus, and deriving from his fulneſs grace for grace. Herein our privilege, happineſs, and duty unite.

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Cambridgeſhire; and the people being gathered together in the church-yard, a Cambridge ſcholar, and none of the ſobereſt of them neither, inquired what the meaning of that concourſe of people was (it being upon a week-day); and being told that one Bunyan, a tinker, was to preach there, he gave a boy two-pence to hold his horſe, ſaying, He was reſolved to hear the tinker prate: and ſo he went into the church to hear him. But God met him there by his miniſtry, ſo that he came out much changed, and would, by his good will, hear none but the tinker for a long time after, he himſelf becoming a very eminent preacher in that county afterwards. This ſtory I know to be true, having many times diſcourſed with the man, and therefore I could not but ſet it down as a ſingular inſtance of the power of God that accompanied his miniſtry (*a*).

But a powerful miniſtry being the greateſt enemy to the devil's kingdom, as that which plucks his vaſſals out of the very jaws of hell, no wonder that he rallied all his force againſt Mr. Bunyan; for he having preached the goſpel about five years, was apprehended at a meeting, and carried before a juſtice of peace, who committed him to priſon, though he offered ſecurity for his appearing at the next ſeſſions; his reaſon for it being, becauſe his ſecurity would not conſent to being bound up that he ſhould preach no more to the people.

(*a*) Here we find, that the fooliſhneſs of preaching became the power of God to the ſalvation of a great ſinner. Thus it will always be: for wherever a faithful miniſter is ſent forth to publiſh the goſpel, the Lord is about to evidence his mercy and grace to ſome, by opening the eyes of their minds, delivering them from the bondage of ſin and Satan, and bringing them into that liberty wherewith the Son of God makes them free indeed. See John viii. 36. This is the only liberty worth contending for; ſince it ſubdues the empire of ſin, gives acceſs to God, and will end in an eternal deliverance from ſin, ſorrow, pain, and every evil, both to ſoul and body, in that kingdom above, where will be quietneſs and aſſurance for ever.

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At the ſeſſions, he was indicted for an upholder and maintainer of unlawful aſſemblies and conventicles, and for not conforming to the church of England. Mr. Bunyan was a man of a free and open ſpirit, and would not diſſemble to ſave himſelf, eſpecially in his Maſter's cauſe: and therefore frankly owned his being at a meeting, and preaching to the people; and that he was a diſſenter from the eſtabliſhed worſhip, acknowledging (as the apoſtle Paul had done before him), that "after the way which they called hereſy, ſo worſhipped he the God of his fathers." The juſtices took this open and plain dealing with them for a confeſſion of the indictment; and ſentenced him to a perpetual baniſhment, becauſe he refuſed to conform, in purſuance of an act made by the then parliament. Upon which he was again committed to priſon, where, tho' his ſentence of baniſhment was never executed upon him, yet he was kept in priſon for twelve years together, bearing that tedious confinement in an uncomfortable and cloſe priſon, and ſometimes under cruel and oppreſſive gaolers, with that chriſtian patience and preſence of mind as became a miniſter of Jeſus Chriſt, and ſuch a cauſe as he was engaged in, and ſuffered for (*a*).

But though his enemies, ſtirred up thereto, were very many, yet were they with-held by a divine power from executing the ſentence of his baniſhment; for

(*a*) The true and zealous ambaſſadors of Chriſt are in nothing more diſtinguiſhed from the world, than by the ſufferings they endure in calling ſinners to repentance: the rage of men and devils will then be let looſe upon them; their names will be caſt out as evil, their doctrine defamed, and their perſons abuſed and afflicted: but their Lord forewarned them of theſe things, when he ſaid, "Marvel not if the world hate you; it hated me, before it hated you," John xv. 18. and to this day it perſecutes Chriſt in his members, and the ſame Spirit in both; ſee Matt. x. 22. But our almighty Redeemer, who never changes in his love, will make his people more than conquerors, by the power of his grace working in and for them.

God had other work for him to do in England: and then his bonds and impriſonment, through the overruling providence of that God, who is both wonderful in his counſel, and excellent in working, tended much to the furtherance of the goſpel; and, by his ſuffering here, he confirmed and ſealed the truth which before he had preached.

It was by making him a viſit in priſon that I firſt ſaw him, and became acquainted with him; and I muſt profeſs, I could not but look upon him to be a man of an excellent ſpirit, zealous for his Maſter's honour, and chearfully committing all his own concernments unto God's diſpoſal. When I was there, above threeſcore diſſenters were in the priſon, beſides himſelf, taken but a little before at a religious meeting at Kaiſtow, in the county of Bedford; beſides twoeminent diſſenting miniſters, to wit, Mr. Wheeler, and Mr. Dun (both very well known in Bedfordſhire, though long ſince with God); by which means the priſon was much crouded. Yet in the midſt of all that hurry which ſo many new-comers occaſioned, I have heard Mr. Bunyan both preach and pray with that mighty ſpirit of faith, and plethory of divine aſſiſtance, that has made me ſtand and wonder (*a*).

Nor did he, while he was in priſon, ſpend his time in a ſupine and careleſs manner, or eat the bread of idleneſs, for there I have been witneſs that his own hands have miniſtered to his and to his family's neceſſities, by making many hundred groſs of long tagged

(*a*) When afflictions for the truth's ſake abound, the conſolations of God's dear children will neither be few nor ſmall. In the mean time, they ſhould commit themſelves, and all their concerns, into the hands of a faithful Creator and Saviour, 1 Pet. iv. 19. well knowing, that the Lord can either deliver his miniſters out of priſon by an angel, as he twice did Peter, Acts v. xii. or, by the power of his Spirit, make their impriſonment conduce more to his glory than their enlargement might have done; which was probably the caſe with reſpect to his beloved ſervant here.

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thread laces, to fill up the vacancies of his time, which he had learned for that purpoſe, ſince he had been in priſon. There alſo I ſurveyed his library, the leaſt, and yet the beſt that ever I ſaw, conſiſting only of two books, a Bible, and the Book of Martyrs. And during his impriſonment (ſince I have ſpoke of his library), he wrote ſeveral excellent and uſeful treatiſes; particularly, The Holy City, Chriſtian Behaviour, The Reſurrection of the Dead, and Grace abounding to the Chief of Sinners; with ſeveral others.

I cannot leave the ſubject of his impriſonment, till I have given the reader a taſte of ſome of his experience there. He profeſſed he never had ſo great an inlet, in all his life, into the word of God, as then. Thoſe ſcriptures, that he ſaw nothing in before, were then in priſon made to ſhine upon him. Jeſus Chriſt alſo was never more real and ſenſible to him than then: 'for there,' ſaid he, 'I have ſeen him and felt him indeed:' and that word, 2 Pet. i. 16. "We have not preached unto you cunningly-deviſed fables," was a bleſſed word unto him there. He has ſometimes been ſo carried up above all fears and temptations (*a*), that he has been able to laugh at deſtruction, and to fear neither the horſe nor his rider. There it was that God gave him ſweet and precious ſights of the for-

(*a*) As our precious, ſympathizing Redeemer ſhares in all the ſufferings of his people, for his righteous cauſe: ſo, under every trying circumſtance, while they humbly and patiently depend upon his almighty arm and loving heart, he will ſupport, ſtrengthen, and comfort them with unuſual manifeſtations of his moſt tender regard and ſpecial favour. He has done ſo from the beginning, as his dear ſervants now in heaven can teſtify; and he has promiſed in his word of infallible truth, that he will never leave nor forſake them, till he has ſubdued all their enemies, and ſent forth judgment unto victory, Matt. xii. 20. he will alſo cauſe their light afflictions to work out for them a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, 2 Cor. iv. 17.

givenefs of his ſins, and of his being with Jeſus in another world: yea, here it was that he found, upon every temptation, that God ſtood by him, and rebuked the tempter.

But, notwithſtanding all this, he found he was a man compaſſed with infirmities, and that a concernment for his poor wife and children would now-and-then be thruſting in, the parting from whom would be to him like the pulling off the fleſh from his bones; for he was both a loving and tender huſband, and an indulgent father, perhaps ſomewhat to a fault; and the many miſeries, hardſhips, and wants, that his poor family was like to meet withal, if he ſhould be taken from them, would often come into his mind (*a*); eſpecially his daughter, who was blind, which lay nearer his heart than all the reſt; and the thoughts of her enduring hardſhip, would at ſome times be almoſt ready to break his heart: but he found God gracious to him even in this particular alſo, greatly ſupporting him by theſe two ſcriptures, Jer. xlix. 11. xv. 11. "Leave thy fatherleſs children, I will preſerve them alive; and let thy widows truſt in me." "The Lord ſaid, Verily it ſhall go well with thy remnant: verily I will cauſe the enemy to intreat thee well in the time of evil."

After this bleſſed man had ſuffered twelve years impriſonment for the teſtimony of a good conſcience, and ſtopp'd the mouths of his greateſt enemies, by his holy, harmleſs, and inoffenſive converſation, it pleaſed God to ſtir up the heart of Dr. Barlow, biſhop of

(*a*) The tender feelings of chriſtians for their diſtreſſed relatives are by no means incompatible with grace, but, on the contrary, are evidences of it: yet at the ſame time, under anxious and diſtruſting fears on their account, it will be our happineſs to have recourſe to ſome of the precious and encouraging promiſes contained in God's word; being aſſured, he is faithful that hath promiſed, and knows how to apply them for our comfort. O for more waiting faith on the adorable Emanuel!

Lincoln, to be a means of his deliverance; which I mention to this biſhop's honour.

After his being at liberty, he made it a great part of his buſineſs to viſit the ſaints of God abroad, paying his chriſtian acknowledgments to them, eſpecially ſuch whoſe hearts God had drawn forth to ſupport him under his ſufferings, preaching the goſpel where-ever he came, and exhorting all not to be afraid or aſhamed of taking up the croſs of Chriſt, or to forſake the aſſembling of themſelves together, though the laws were againſt it, as knowing that God ought to be obeyed before man: and for ſuch as were under ſufferings upon that ſcore, he made it his particular care to get and ſend relief to them. He alſo took great care to viſit the ſick, and to ſupport them both externally and internally, according to their wants, and his ability. And God ſo bleſſed his miniſtry, and accompanied it with his ſpecial preſence, that many ſouls were brought to the acknowledgment of the truth as it is in Jeſus.

He was alſo very ready and ſucceſsful in reconciling the differences that were among God's people, where-ever he found them; and by that means had ſaved many families from ruin; being an ambaſſador of peace in every reſpect (*a*).

He would frequently look back upon former deliverances, and bleſs God; of which ſome were exceedingly remarkable, and none more ſo than that which I am now going to relate. Being a ſoldier in

(*a*) So oppoſite was Mr. Bunyan's ſpirit to that of an Antinomian, that he not only enforced and publiſhed the doctrines of grace in their genuine purity and conſiſtency; but alſo believed, held, and preached (agreeable to the inſpired writings of Paul, James, and the reſt of the apoſtles), that the faith which does not work by love to God and man, cannot be the faith of God's elect. That theſe were the ſentiments of this good man, the above atteſtations of his kind and benevolent diſpoſition (not to mention his writings throughout), evidently prove.

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the parliament's army, at the ſiege of Leiceſter, in 1645, he was drawn out to ſtand centinel, but another ſoldier voluntarily deſired to go in his room; which Mr. Bunyan conſenting to, he went; and, as he ſtood centinel there, was ſhot into the head with a muſket-bullet, and died. This was a deliverance that Mr. Bunyan would often mention, but never without thankſgiving to God.

He was a man of a piercing judgment, and had a great inſight into things; as appeared in the late reign, when liberty of conſcience was ſo unexpectedly given by king James II. to diſſenters of all perſuaſions. He ſaw it was not out of kindneſs to diſſenters that they were ſo ſuddenly ſet at liberty, and freed from the hard perſecutions that had long lain ſo heavy upon them. He acknowledged, that liberty of conſcience was good, and was every man's birthright by a divine charter; but he could not believe it was then given out of a good end; and that the bright ſunſhine of the preſent liberty, was but to introduce a black cloud of ſlavery upon us, when once the deſigns then laying were ripe for execution; and therefore exhorted his congregation at Bedford, and others alſo, to make uſe of the Ninevites' remedy, to avert the impending ſtorm (*a*).

It was his conſtant practice, when he had his liberty, to come up once a year to London, and to preach in ſeveral places there, but more particularly

(*a*) Mr. Bunyan had the penetration to diſcern, as all wiſe and good men have, that the Chriſtleſs world, whatever fair appearances they may put on, can ultimately mean no real good to the cauſe, people, and ways of God: ſome ſiniſter deſign often lurks under their ſpecious pretences. It muſt be ſo, in the nature of things; for the upright chriſtian, by his principles and practice, condemns the world, and is hated by it; and "can two walk together, except they be agreed?" Amos iii. 3. In every exigence, and in all difficulties, if we apply to the Lord Jeſus in humility, and by faſting and prayer, he will give wiſdom, ſuccour, power, and victory over every ſpiritual enemy, and, in the end, eternal ſalvation.

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in Southwark, near the Falcon; and his labours met with a general acceptance from all his auditors. And from London he uſed to ride his circuit in the country, viſiting the ſaints, and ſtrengthening their hands in the ways of God.

In his family, he kept up a daily and conſtant courſe of prayer, reading, and exhortation; inſtructing his children, and exhorting them to walk in the ways of God. He had the bleſſing that Agar prayed for, "neither poverty nor riches;" but God always gave him food convenient. I once told him of a gentleman in London, a wealthy citizen, that would take his ſon Joſeph apprentice without money, which might be a great means to advance him: but he replied to me, 'God did not ſend him to advance his family, but to preach the goſpel' (*a*).

The laſt act of his life was a labour of love and charity: for a young gentleman, who was Mr. Bunyan's neighbour, having fallen under the diſpleaſure of his father, he deſired Mr. Bunyan to be the inſtrument of making up the breach; which he both undertook, and happily effected: but in his return to London, being overtaken with exceſſive rains, and coming to his lodgings very wet (which was at Mr. Straddock's, a grocer, at the Star upon Snow-hill), he fell ſick of a violent fever, which he bore with much conſtancy and patience, reſigning himſelf to the will of

(*a*) This worthy labourer, agreeable to the advice given by Jeremiah to Baruch, Jer. xlv. 5. ſought not great things for himſelf; but, like a faithful ſteward of the gifts of God, preferred the glory of his divine Maſter, and the ſalvation of immortal ſouls, to every inferior object. He had, no doubt, often meditated with holy, humble confidence, on that queſtion of our Lord to his diſciples, Luke xxii. 35. "When I ſent you without purſe and ſcrip and ſhoes lacked ye any thing? And they ſaid, Nothing." He well knew, that as the God who poſſeſſes heaven and earth had imparted to him the bread of life to break to his people, he would with-hold no earthly bleſſing from him and his. May the Lord increaſe our faith in this bountiful Saviour!

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God, and desiring to be dissolved, that he might be with Christ: he looked upon life as a delay of that blessedness which his soul was aspiring to, and thirsting after: and in this holy longing frame of spirit, after a sickness of ten days, he breathed out his soul into the hands of his blessed Redeemer, following his happy Pilgrim from the City of Destruction to the Heavenly Jerusalem (*a*).

A few days after his decease, his remains were interred in Bunhill-Fields burying-ground, and a handsome tomb erected to his memory, which is still to be seen.

(*a*) He now hungers and thirsts no more, but derives endless supplies of love, peace, and joy, from the inexhaustible fulness of the God Man: he now waits for the reunion of soul and body, the day of eternal redemption, when "they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever," Dan. xii. 3. Reader, may the Lord the Spirit enable us so to follow him, as he followed Christ, that we, together with him and the redeemed, may enter into the joy of our Lord, and unite our songs of praise, with the celestial host, to Him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever! Amen.

The following short ELEGY was written by a Friend of his:

In Memory of Mr. *JOHN BUNYAN*, who departed this Life Aug. 17. 1688. and in the fifty-ninth Year of his Age.

THE PILGRIM, travelling o'er the world's vast stage,
At last does end his weary pilgrim age:
He now in pleasant vallies does sit down,
And, for his toil, receives a glorious crown;
The storms are past, the terrors vanish all,
Which in his way did so affrighting fall.
He grieves not, sighs no more, his race is run
Successfully, that was so well begun.
You'll say, He's dead: Alas, he cannot die;
He's only chang'd to immortality.
Weep not for him who has no cause of tears:
Hush then your sighs, and calm your needless fears,
If any thing in love to him is meant,
Tread his last steps, and your own sins repent.
If knowledge of things here at all remains
Beyond the grave, to please him for his pains
And sufferings in this world, then live upright,
And that will be to him a grateful sight.
Run such a race, as you again may meet,
And find your conversation far more sweet,
When, purg'd from dross, you shall, unmix'd, possess
The purest essence of eternal bliss.

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